

THE

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# LESBIAN TIDE

A FEMINIST PUBLICATION, WRITTEN BY AND FOR THE RISING TIDE OF WOMEN TODAY

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HOLY FAMILY

Article: SAPPHA OF LESBOS  
by Ann Forfreedom

Contest: GET YOUR PICTURE  
ON THE COVER OF  
THE LESBIAN TIDE

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RUBYFRUIT JUNGLE



MERRY  
MARYMAS



# The LESBIAN TIDE

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 5

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The opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Tide Collective.

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# FIRST NAT'L LESBIAN KISS-IN

by Joanie Millard

October 20, 1973 marked the first National Lesbian Kiss-In held on the steps of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and sponsored by lesbians from the Westside Women's Center and the Gay Community Service Center of Los Angeles. Approximately 75 Southern California lesbians proudly gathered together in anticipation of that big moment at noon when, as gay sisters, they would openly hug and kiss in front of each other, the general public and the press and television.

Spirits were high and the pride and love of these women were easily expressed when interviewed. I asked two lesbians "Why are you here today?" and evoked such answers as:

"I think it's a really good statement. The whole purpose of these actions is to make society take us seriously. We're no longer going to hide. We want to be out in the open and be able to express our feelings like everyone else does and not be hassled about it."

Another woman stated that "such an open action is important as there are a lot of lesbians who will hear of this and see this and will get some strength from it because a lot of times you feel like you're the only lesbian around since we are all so invisible."

In our struggle we are always talking about the absolute need for sisterhood and one woman proved that sisterly love is alive and well and flourishing at Lesbian Demonstrations. This woman approached me and said "I'm straight and I'm a feminist and I really think I should be heard because I think it's important that straight women come out and support their gay sisters since they are so oppressed."

In response to this oppression the lesbian sisters, at exactly 12:00, kissed and hugged and seemed almost oblivious to the sounds of cameras from major L.A. radio and television stations clicking in their ears.

When asked how she felt about making her feelings public, Jan Field, of U.C.L.A.'s Gay Sisterhood, replied:

"If I didn't express my feelings in public, and I do continually, it's like forgiving or apologizing for my love and I won't do that as I feel very good about it. So this is a very strong statement for me and I think for all the lesbians. It means an awful lot to openly say to our parents and to the public that this is right and this is good."



Jan also answered the question as to whether or not today's actions would be antagonizing to heterosexual observers.

"Straight people often perceive two women who kiss in public or hold hands in public or walk arm in arm, just as a heterosexual couple would do, as crusading and pushing their ideas off on the rest of the public where in effect, it's a common right. They don't stop to think that they do this all the time in their lives but if we do it we antagonize them and are denied our self-rights."

Lest one forget how some of the general population does feel about lesbians openly expressing their love and affection, we have the replies of two older women, when asked how they felt about what they just saw (kissing and embracing):

One vehemently answered, "I think it's absolutely sickening. I've never been exposed to anything like this." To which I asked her if she thought it was sickening because it was the first time she had seen this. "I don't think God meant us to live like that." The other woman also thought it was disgusting and "if they



want to live like that let them keep it to themselves. Why advertise?" I answered that question with a question. Heterosexuals can hold hands and display and advertise affection in public so why is it any different for two women to do it? To which she said, "You don't have to do things like that on the street because it's not normal. God made it like that for men and women to love, but not for women."

I had the opportunity to ask Dick Carlson, of ABC Television, what he thought about the Kiss-In. "I don't think it's very startling. I saw that these women were coming out of the closet and I think that's cool. People ought to do what they want to do and they shouldn't have to hide to do it. In fact, if they want to do anything in front of this museum it's fine with me." Unfortunately, Mr. Carlson's liberal understanding must not be shared by the rest of the ABC staff since there was not one bit of coverage shown on either of their two news programs. (CBS did, however, give it 2 minutes of straight coverage.)

Another gentleman had the kind of attitude we wish the rest of the straight society would have and that is, he can't really relate to it but just because *he* can't relate to it doesn't make it wrong or illegal or immoral.

Listening to the opinions of others is important in our struggle, but it is vital that people listen to, understand and feel what it is we are trying to say. The women who sponsored the Kiss-In had this to say in their statement, an attitude shared by lesbians everywhere.

"We are Lesbians. We are the people who have first hand knowledge of the beauty and righteousness of love between women.

"Today is the beginning. The beginning of a new world based on the premise that we, as working, supporting members of a society, are entitled to the basic rights of life, liberty and the open expression of happiness.

"Our evolving pride will no longer allow us to hide among the substrata of socially acceptable robots going through the motions of living in a "free" society. Nor will it allow us to settle for an amenable tolerance based on the agreement to stay out of your sight and your minds.

"Instead we are motivated by and dedicated to the vision of a future radically different from the past, a future which will accomodate the wildest dreams of the Lesbian people and all other people.

"We as Lesbians are taking charge of our own destinies. For your own sake, support us in our struggle to build the future. If you can't be of help, step aside. Either way, there will be no turning back. ▲

## CONTROLLED FOLLY

*this is radio K-O-C-K  
brought to you by—  
corporated-carnal-cravings  
and mystical rhetoric ramblings—  
here's another fantasy-fugue but first—  
a word from the brotherhood of Hamm's ?*

*in the name of reality  
this is the goodwill generation  
soaring down to the grounds  
of mental cruelty  
meditating upon the bubbles in beer  
sitting at separate tables of thought  
in the funky-plastic-restaurant  
they begin to question and wonder about themselves...*

*an attempted orgy  
drowning under the guise of rhine wine  
to wander home to dream alone...  
in the name of reality*

*the supervisor drops another librium  
as she watched her bell-telephone-call-girls..  
love between two women is just a kiss away!  
his catholic-eyes lit up at the thought of it*

*in the name of reality  
spontaneity listens to the free form  
moving, singing, laughing, dancing  
within the love set free from woman to woman  
from beds of persuasion to beds of passion  
from beds of boredom to beds of knowing  
from heads thinking, to heads nodding.....*

*in the name of reality  
let go! let go!  
the sun has come out  
have  
you?*

*alene—juliette*



LESBIAN TIDE



# GET YOUR PICTURES ON THE COVER OF THE LESBIAN TIDE

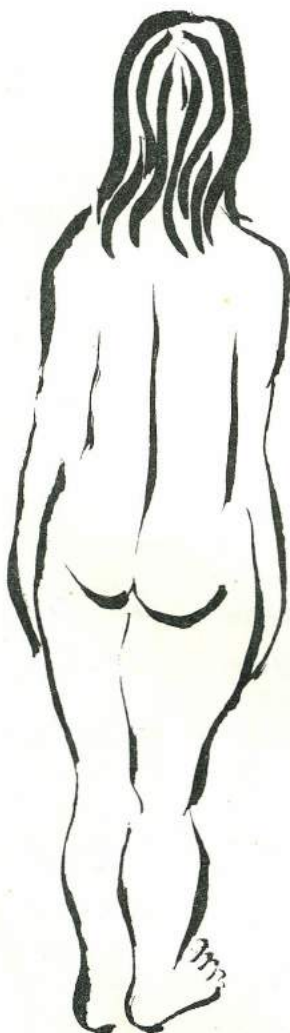
Much to our distress, *The Lesbian Tide* has been the subject of several parodies of the recent hit song, "The Cover of the Rolling Stone." Sisters have set to music their desires to appear on the cover of *The Lesbian Tide*. After lengthy discussion and careful political analysis, the Tide Collective has decided to encourage such lunacy. Therefore we have launched a search to find the best versions of this parody.

All sisters are encouraged to submit entries. The words to the winning songs will be published in future issues, and the authors will be pictured On A Cover of *The Lesbian Tide*. So send in those entireties, 'cause the

contest is only open for a couple of months. You, your lover, your group, your dog, can be *cover dyke of the month* if you win this amazing once-in-a-lifestyle contest.

Send your entries to "Cover of *The Lesbian Tide*," *Tide Collective*, 373 No. Western Ave. Los Angeles, Calif. 90004. Be sure to enclose an address so we can notify you if you are a winner. Keep a copy of your entry. None will be returned because nobody here wants to stuff a million entries back into envelopes (even self-addressed, stamped ones).

To inspire you, we are printing one of the versions already floating around.



## THE COVER OF THE LESBIAN TIDE

O, we're pretty good lesbians  
We got golden fingers  
And we're loved everywhere we go  
We go to the Gay Center  
And we belong to the Gay Sisterhood  
At UCLA  
We go to all the Tide fund raisers  
To give us all kinds of thrills  
But the thrill we've never known  
Is the thrill that'll getcha  
When you get your picture  
On the Cover of *The Lesbian Tide*  
chorus: "*Lesbian Tide*"  
Wanna see our picture  
In the "*Lesbian Tide*"  
Wanna buy five copies  
For my mother  
Wanna see my dyky face  
On the cover of  
*The "Lesbian Tide"*



O, I've written poems  
And sent them in  
I got my poor old lover  
Constantly kissing me  
It's all designed to blow our minds  
But our minds won't get blown  
Like the blow that'll get you  
When you get your picture  
On the cover of *The Lesbian Tide*.  
repeat chorus

We got all the friends  
That money can buy  
So we never have to be alone  
And we keep gettin butchy-er  
But we can't get our pictures  
On the cover of *The Lesbian Tide*  
repeat chorus

By S.D. and K.A.





## The Rape After The Rape

Hello Sisters—

I liked the article about celibacy in the November issue of *Lesbian Tide*.

I don't know if you remember me or not. I was one of the women who was raped during the days of the Lesbian Conference.

I have enclosed a "story" or "poem" or "stream-of-consciousness" piece that I wrote, once I finally got in touch with my feelings about the whole thing.

About the article: A) Everything in the story is true—what The Men said to me, and what I thought. B) It took me three months to finally figure out what I was feeling, rather than blocking, ignoring those real feelings. C) I would like to see it

printed in *Lesbian Tide* because I respect your publication over any other I've seen thus far.

I read it at a "rape poetry reading" the other night. Not so much to change things, attitudes about rape, but because I was one of the two lesbians in the Twin City Women Poets--ACKNOWLEDGED lesbians. The TCWP were not, at first, going to let me read. My God. Because I am a lesbian.

Anyway, it was the most powerful thing read that night.

We witches will rise again, and our Goddesses have already been reincarnated.

by k/t



We were sitting in the District Attorney's office, Los Angeles, California, because of my rape. And the question in MY mind was: Will my rapist be prosecuted or won't he be prosecuted? But the question in HIS was: "WHAT DO YOUR PARENTS THINK OF YOUR LESBIAN TENDENCIES?" (My male defender who let my rapist walk free.)

Because: 1) You were hitch-hiking.

On a bright, sunny day to a National Lesbian Conference. "Why were you hitch-hiking? NO. 1 QUESTION OF DIRE IMPORTANCE when being interrogated by the local, helpful, concerned, patriotic, protective pigs.

(I did not have a car and my motorcycle was in another state and I didn't have the money to buy a bike and the walk was a good thirty miles, that's why.)

"Didn't you think it was a little dangerous to do?"

(The thought NEVER crossed my mind. Because usually women pick up women hitch-hikers, certainly not: Men-Who-Are-On-The-Make. And who was to guess that I would be one of the women who is raped every 14 minutes in this grand old united states of amerika? A little dangerous? Heavens, no. Women are never raped.)

(I did want to get to the conference, though.)

"Where were you going?"

"To the National Lesbian Conference."

Pause. Pause. Pause. He lifts his eyes.

Very softly. "Are you a lesbian?"

"Yes."

("Well," said the civil attorney after the state had let the rapist walk out a free man, "What did you EXPECT? Just FLAUNTING your gayness at them! You were just egging them on! They were probably trying to straighten you out!! heh, heh)

(I bet you wish YOU could. Heh, heh.)

"Uh, yes . . . I heard about it on the television--that, uh, conference, interesting, most of the time, you know, we hear about those kind of men."

(Yes, yes, a pity isn't it, to hear only about the MALE pervert, female perverts are so much more intriguing. To the Man, anyway.)

#### ON WITH THE INTERROGATION

(How long, how long, how long will this last? My sisters are waiting outside for me and I do not want to

think about sucking his dick and lying beneath him. I want to be with my sisters who you would not let into this office with me because--I don't know . . . you never gave a reason . . . you never have to . . . )

"Two BLACK men picked you up? Why, then, weren't you suspicious from the start?"

(They weren't eating watermelon.)

"Can you give me a description of them?"

(I just SAID they were Black.)

"Well, one was pure Black, and the other was a lighter shade. One had a suit on and was about 5'6" and the other was about 5'8".

(We would NEVER have caught him had we gone by YOUR description said my Male Defender contemptuously to me. After I pointed him out when he had, by coincidence, walked into the police station when I was there. To report his stolen car, which was not really stolen, but had been smashed up by his drunken buddy while he was raping me, but he wanted the insurance money so he had to say it was stolen. You would never have caught him anyway because you were not interested in catching him. I know. I gave you his address and phone number and name. And when I came to the station a day later you had done NOTHING NOTHING NOTHING NOTHING NOTHING.)

"About how much did they weigh?"

"I don't know. I was never good at estimating heights or weights."

(Your description was totally off. He's 6'2" and weighs 170 pounds. Stupid woman. Addle-brained. Flighty idiot.)

(But I DID memorize the house number and street where they took me and got his phone and address. And a description of the car. Well, just the color . . . I don't know what kind it is . . . )

Because: 2) You didn't Resist.

"You mean to tell me you didn't resist at ALL? And they had no gun, no knife? You just followed their orders?"



"Yes."

(6'2". 170 pounds. I only weighed 110 pounds and I was only five feet tall. No excuse. No excuse AT ALL. Isn't your virginity more valuable than your life?)

(No.)

"You made no effort at all to resist?"

"No. I just said I didn't want to do it."

(No. I don't want to do it. I'm a lesbian. I don't sleep with just anyone. No, I don't dig intercourse. I don't believe in paying you for my ride. Least of all, a good fuck. No, I don't wish to do it. No . . ." DO YOU WANT YOUR ASS KICKED IN OR YOUR HEAD SMASHED? DO YOU DIG WHAT I'M SAYING?" Yes. Yes. In fact I do. "THEN TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES. TAKE THEM ALL OFF." O.K. o.k. o.k. . .)

"What position were you in when you were lying on the bed?"

(Standing on my head. We lesbians do it different.)

"Who took off your underpants--you or him? Did he make a full thrust? Did he come? What did he say while he was doing it? What did you say?"

(I groaned with sheer delight. Secretly, and I tell you this in utmost confidence; I wanted to be raped.)

Because: 3) All we have is your word against his.

(His and yours and the male judge and the male prosecutor and the male defendant and the male jury and the male lawyers and THE MALE.)

"I would have advised any woman in your position to do exactly the same thing you did" said the assistant to the District Attorney. Who was a woman. Who took the case to the District Attorney. Who was, again, The Man. Who said: WHY WAS SHE HITCH-HIKING?

Because: 4) You can't expect the state to pay your fare here to testify against him with such a flimsy case as this.

He opened the door of the pig station and let me walk out.

"You realize I did all I could. It was up to the District Attorney, and he decided against prosecuting."

(Pontias Pilate speaks again.)

He walked up one flight of stairs and unlocked the door of my rapists' cell.

(Fantasies of murder. Never before. Never before. Never before. I am a NON-VIOLENT person.)

"You shouldn't stab somebody just 'cuz they want a little piece."

(The knife. Opening and closing in my sweating palm.)

"You want your ass kicked or your head smashed in?"

(Stabbing The Man over and over in my mind, the pressure of my fingers opening, closing the knife. To kill. Or maim. Who cares. You told me, you told me, you told me, you wouldn't hurt me. With your prick going deeper and deeper. HURTING. Suffocating, entrapped under your bulk.)

"You shouldn't stab somebody just because they want a little piece."

(Check it out. Think you have V.D.? Had any sexual contact lately? No. Oh . . . yeah . . . The Rape. How many side effects?)

(After "making love" with a sister. Wondering why the shitty, hopeless feeling inside of me afterwards. Flash of insight. This is exactly the same feeling that I had after The Rape! How long to haunt me. Think you'll be able to be touched again without feeling like you're being re-raped? Who cares.)

"You shouldn't just stab somebody 'cuz they want a little piece."

(Trying to think of right and wrong as his menacing eyes appraise my naked body and violence and non-violence as he says WANT YOUR ASS KICKED OR YOUR HEAD SMASHED IN and effective and non-effective as he whispers DIG what I'm saying with the knife now opening and closing in my hand ready to slash his throat.) ▲



## WOMEN WORKERS SPEAK UP

by Karla Jay, New York  
Correspondent

In October, there were two separate conferences on the plight of the woman worker. The first event was a speak-out held at the Church of Saint John the Divine near Harlem and sponsored by the New York Radical Feminists. The speakers were primarily "blue-collar" workers and included testimony from mail carriers, farm workers, household employees, factory workers, and so on. Some of the testimony, such as that of a Chinese woman who told the audience through a translator that she worked in a Chinatown factory for one dollar per hour, was so moving that it brought some members of the audience to tears.

The second event, sponsored by a large coalition of feminist and lesbian groups (including Lesbian Feminist Liberation, N.O.W., the Radical Feminists, Committee for the Rights of Office Workers and other groups), was held at a public school on the East Side of Manhattan. This event was better publicized and promoted and therefore had a much larger turnout. The all-day conference consisted of a panel of speakers in the morning, with workshops on various aspects of working and organizing women workers during the rest of the day.

Women at both conferences expressed great satisfaction that the Women's Liberation Movement was finally doing something to come to grips with the problems of working women—particularly those women working in the "lower echelons" of society. ▲

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## Women's Liberation

### Building Endangered

Karla Jay, New York Correspondent

Members of several Women's Liberation groups have become embroiled in a dispute with a Chelsea community group for control of the Women's Liberation Building on West 20th Street in Manhattan. Although the women have offered the community partial use of the building, which is an old firehouse rented from the city for one dollar per month, the neighborhood group wants complete occupancy of the building to house as yet unformed groups for community counseling, day care, etc. The community would allow the women to use a very small portion of the building — space which would be inadequate to house the numerous activities now centered in the Women's Building, such as karate, dance, anti-rape groups, lesbian groups, and the food conspiracy. The Women have obtained temporary control of the building on a month-to-month basis and are hoping that they will be able to offer the community use of the building without having to give up our only center. They are also hoping for a permanent lease so that they will be able to fix up the building to their satisfaction without worrying about eviction. It is another case where the powerless have been pitted against the powerless by the city, which should be able to find adequate space for community projects without denying space to women.

▲  
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# THE MEAN MOTHERS

by Nancy Williamson

The Boston-area Lesbian Mothers group began in the summer of 1973. Nine women, calling themselves The Mean Mothers, meet once a week on Thursday evening for a consciousness raising meeting. (The name of the group grew spontaneously out of a confrontation between one of the group members and her small boy who told her she was mean because she had asked him not to disturb the meeting. "I will *be* mean," she warned, "if you interrupt this meeting." One of the other mothers chimed in "And we have eight mean mothers here tonight to back her up.") Children whose mothers have no babysitter come to the meeting and play in another room. In addition, once every three weeks there is a meeting with all the children at someone's home or at a public place. Once the mothers and children attended the women's bar together.

## Shalom

BETH CHAYIM CHADASHIM

*A Metropolitan Community Temple*



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INFORMATION: 213-462-2597

The group was started by some mothers who were associated with the Cambridge Women's Center. It grew out of resentment at the lack of support and the indifferent to hostile attitudes manifested by some gay women toward gay mothers. Recognizing that the only support and organization of gay mothers will come from each other, several women formed the group in an effort to lighten the burden of being lesbians and mothers in a society which gives little positive support for either.

The women vary in age, background, and education as well as political orientation. The children range in age from 2 to 10, and two of them are adopted. It was decided in the beginning that the group would be open only to mothers, thus no lovers attend. Plans are being made for a meeting in the future with ex-lovers and lovers. At the present time the group is closed to new people. The members decided that in order to maintain the c-r nature of the group and to create and sustain an atmosphere of trust it is necessary to have the group closed. However, some of the women also work with a mother's rap group which meets at the Daughters of Bilitis office on Wednesday nights. It is hoped that the open meeting will eventually result in some form of organization which can provide public education, social opportunities, legal information and aid for Lesbian mothers.

The c-r meetings are generally unstructured, although at the beginning of each meeting the group decides whether to concentrate on one topic or to cover a wide range of questions. Usually the discussion is narrowed down to one topic, e.g. sex, permanent relationships, the effect of break-ups on children, living with children and lovers, raising male children to be non-chauvinist, the impact of lesbianism on children, professional attitudes toward gay mothers. The discussions are serious and usually last three hours. However, a group sense of humor and emotional rapport developed quickly among the women. My own sense of exhilaration from the group has been even greater than it was in the early days of the women's movement. In this group I have no feelings of difference because of my age and my child that I often felt in Boston Female Liberation where I was active for several years. The ties of mother hood have proved somewhat stronger than those of sisterhood.

At the moment, the group has no plans for political action; however, all the members are anxious to let other women know of the success of the group and hope to see a larger and more structured gay mothers organization develop alongside the c-r group. ▲



# YEAR ONE

"i was alone  
before you carried me.  
is this what it means then  
to be carried?"

by Tessier

i've been lately thinking about the time it first occurred to me that, for many, feminism meant the art of reducing the individual to the lowest common social denominator--and wondering if we still do that. i came to realize that in spite of so much rhetoric about the "strength" of women, that strength was designed to be manifest in the group and not in the individual. And i remember a time when, though none of us would have admitted it then, there were many women who lived in mortal terror that the body of women would discover that we were talented. Thinking back on it, i am reminded of the doctrine that The Class Shall Proceed As A Whole, as espoused by my second-grade teacher (which is why they took Dumas and Shakespeare and Hugo away from me when i was seven). i don't mean that we intentionally suppressed one another. But amid the discussion of the "power of the group" and the "pooling of our resources", perhaps we became afraid that the woman who got to the knowledge first would run away with it and leave us alone again. There was much talk of ways and means to avoid "power trips" and "elitism". We meant to make every woman stronger; we meant to teach each other everything. But all too often our best intentions evolved into the conviction that no woman should move faster, function more efficiently, or do anything any better than any other woman. and the greatest of all sins was to lead anyone anywhere, for leaders were The Man's Weapon, and in Our Movement there were to be no leaders. (Like much of Marx, we discovered it excellent in theory, and very difficult to execute in a practical manner.) It comes down to this. We caught the Second Wave by grouping together so we would not have to live with being alone. Now we must learn to live with one another.

From high school i remember the tests we were required to take, in order to discover whether we were psycho, or schizy, or queer, or anything terrible like that. Of all the questions, the one that most fascinated me asked whether i was afraid of the crawly things on the doorknob. i remember thinking, "i'm terrified of them. One of them might kill me some day. But i'm not

going to tell *them* that. i might be a paranoid, but i'm not a stupid paranoid." For most of us who were crazy at one time or another, the terror rested not in the madness itself, but in the danger that someone would discover how radically different we were. We did our best not to attract attention.

all my life i have wanted to wear gloves, so that i could have the option of touching or not touching. But i have never done that, because i have learned that if i were to do such a thing, even you my sisters would find it frightening and strange. and you would watch me carefully and ask one another, "Why do you suppose she wears those gloves? What do you suppose she is hiding there?" And i would be alone again.

Let us go back and look at women again. Let us have a year in order to recognize every woman differently. Let this be the year that belongs to the woman who plays trombone, the woman who laughs out loud, the woman who can stand on her ear, the woman who sings blues; The Woman, each woman, individually frightening, amazing, volatile, vulnerable, wonderful and real. ▲

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Edited by Karla Jay & Allen Young

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# SO YOU WANT TO START A BUSINESS?

by Barbara McLean

The Tide of the women's movement recently seems to be drifting more toward an "I can do that myself" posture. More and more women and women's organizations have taken to creating and selling their own product rather than buying it from the man. Auto mechanics, carpenters, retail store owners. There are now women's banks and finance companies. Feminists are now saying that women, even those in the movement, should be PAID for their products and services. And why not? One cannot eat rhetoric.

Still, of course, there are many more women who, while they have the desire and ability to go into business for themselves, hesitate to do so because they simply don't know how. We women have been duped by men into believing that business is SO complex. Bull Shit. If you've got a product or service to sell, all you need to get started is a good idea, a couple of hundred dollars and the willingness to work about 16 hours a day for awhile.

You need no experience, no credentials, no references. Not even a credit rating (although that does help later). It is not necessary to incorporate. You don't need a lawyer. You don't even need to read the rest of this article if you'll just make a trip down to City Hall. Go to the City Clerk's office and say you want information on how to start a business. They'll have a brochure which will provide all the information you need. And the more unknowledgeable you appear to be, the more willing they are to help. It gives them a chance to feel important. Shine it on.

They'll ask you what type of business it is you wish to start, i.e.: service, retail, etc. and then will provide you with the necessary forms and pamphlets. You will have to pay a business tax (\$30.00 in L.A. for a service company) based on your business type. The business tax is not a license, just a tax, but the same form you fill out is all you need to establish your business in your city. If yours is a non-profit organization, you will be exempt from this tax. Non-profit organizations, however, must file for a non-profit status with the State. Let me confine this article to profit-making organizations.

You will need no license to operate other than police permits, fire permits, liquor licenses, dancing permits, if those are required. If they are required, you'll have to go to the various departments such as the Police Commission and Bureau of Fire Prevention, etc. Liquor

licenses are the most expensive, costing from about \$300 per year to \$10,000 per year depending on your business, city and location. If you are into health services or restaurants, you'll have to get a health permit from the County Health Department.

But let's suppose that you have a product to sell, or a service which has nothing to do with health or "adult" recreation. All you need to do is fill out two forms:

1. An application for a Business Tax Registration Certificate, and

2. A Fictitious Business Name Statement.

The total fee in L.A. for these two items is \$40.00. You fill out the Business Tax form at the City Clerk's office and the Fictitious Name form at the County Clerk's office. If there is only one of you, your business will be a proprietorship; if there are several of you, it will be a partnership. You can "split" a partnership any way you choose, 50/50, 20/20/20/40, whatever. That's your decision. How you split the profits is your decision. In any case, there are NO requirements to meet, not age or experience. Nothing except the filing fee which is really a tax. The amount of tax you pay each year is based on "gross receipts" (total sales or service charges) of the preceding calendar year. And don't forget that all business expenses and losses are deductible on your own income tax. Anyway, in the case of a new business, where the tax is based upon gross receipts, only the minimum tax is paid at the start. At the end of the first calendar year in business, a "back tax" is paid based on the actual amount of gross receipts from the beginning of the business until the end of the first calendar year. For an example of taxes, in L.A., for a retail sales organization (clothing stores, restaurants, bookstores, etc.) the rate of tax is \$18.75 per calendar year or fractional part thereof for the first \$15,000 or less of annual gross receipts plus \$1.25 for each \$1,000 or part thereof in excess of \$15,000. Professional and occupational service charges are a little more: \$30 per year for the first \$6,000, etc.

If your name is the name of your company (Mary Smith Book Store) you do not have to file a Fictitious Name Statement. But for (XYZ Book Store) you must. This is to insure that you don't rip off some company's name. You have to file no later than 40 days from the time business commences to be transacted. The fee in L.A. is \$10.00. Within 30 days after the statement is filed, you have to get it published in a newspaper within your county. If in California you can do this through California Newspaper Bureau (they will contact YOU)




for a fee of \$23.00

Once you've taken care of filing, which should take you about one hour, you should attend to matters of business operation. Design your business logo, letterhead, etc. Have stationary and business cards printed (\$50 to \$100) and then, if you can't yet afford an office, get an answering service. They are worth the money (about \$10.00 installation, \$15 to \$25 per month). Then let the world know you're there. Get the word passed and advertise in local women's publications.

It's now that the real work starts. That 16 hours per day. Spend a few of those at first with a local feminist accountant friend who will help you set up your books for free. Then work your ass off putting out the finest produce or service you can offer. You can do it. Good Luck Sister.

Any questions? If so, send them in. If there is enough interest in this type of information, we'll do a regular column on it or just do a question/answer thing. Let us know how you feel. ▲

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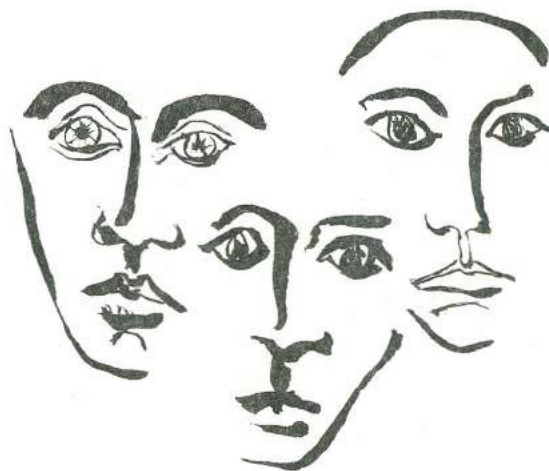


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## womankindness



### THE DISCOVERY OF THE CLITORIS

by Sudi

For all Lesbian sisters out there who are:  
clitoral-enthusiasts (that's most of us, eh?)  
poster-freaks  
out-right feminists  
female body-lovers  
pleasure-seekers

and any other folks who are just into womanness, there's a new poster out that'll surely intrigue you.

4 naked sisters in a circle dance rejoice to THE DISCOVERY OF THE CLITORIS, the title of one of the most inspired feminist posters to come out of the current Women's Liberation movement. It's done by Tiziana of Linseed, a feminist art collective in Berkeley.

Let me describe the scene a little to give you a sense of the spirit of "the discovery".

It's a very very simple red line drawing on a bright yellow background. 4 women are crowded round each other, exploring and celebrating the discovery of their clitoris.

\*One woman is standing, opening her clitoris for sisters to see.

\*Another sister is bending down low to see her parts, pointing to what she sees.

\*A third sister is sitting, Native American style, surveying the new scene.

\*The 4th sister is standing, with her head bent down, her fist and knee raised in the air, dancing to the new music.

You get the very distinct feeling from this poster that the women are rather proud of themselves....

The COLLECTIVE discovery of the clitoris, by the 2nd wave of feminism will prove, I think, to be one of the significant historical discoveries toward the ultimate



freedom of women. This poster reflects that collective discovery.

Men, with their anti-humanist propaganda, have tried for thousands of years to keep the significance of the clitoris hidden from women. They have done this by keeping us in fear, shame and ignorance of our bodies, and—above all—in ignorance of the clitoris, the **SOURCE** of female erotic pleasure (the pleasure button, as it's affectionately called by some).

Through various patriarchal systems over the centuries (technology has advanced but the sex in power remains the same), men have based their myths about women on a valuable (from their point of view) strategic assumption:

there's more than one way to skin a cat.

\*One way has been for certain cultures to perform a stitch-er-up operation on the woman's genital area. That way, you can't even find her lower "erogenous zone", let alone stimulate it. (This is a weak patriarchy's particular stylistic approach to controlling women through their erotic responses.)

\*There's the ancient male trick of Clitoridectomy, performed mainly in the Middle East to prevent women from straying (like pussy cats are prone to do). This operation removes the woman's clitoris and puts it inside her vaginal opening (something like clitoral lobotomy).

\*Some cultures, turned off by long "masculine"-looking clitorises on the women, have practiced pouring a chemical on the clitoris, designed to make it shrivel up into a more "effeminate" size.

(On the other hand there are some clitoral-oriented African peoples, such as the Easter Islanders, who consider external genitals to be important contributors to erotic attractiveness. It is common practice in such cultures to pull and otherwise manipulate the vulvar lips and sometimes the clitoris of the young women to enhance their sexual excitement and hence their value as sexual partners.)

Modern-day straight psychiatry still believes in and lays on us the Freudian notion that vaginal orgasm—the 'real woman's' orgasm—is where it's at!

Only now are women beginning to recover from this "master" plan—the great penetration (fucking) conspiracy—and assert out right to define our own sexuality.

Women everywhere have much ignorance and inexperience to overcome—ignorance about how our bodies look and function, and inexperience with the pleasure they can give us.

Like Ann Koedt's 1970 expose, **THE MYTH OF THE VAGINAL ORGASM**, Tiziana's 1973 tribute, **THE DISCOVERY OF THE CLITORIS**, is designed to illustrate the knowledge women are gaining about ourselves and our bodies—and the spirit of celebration & sisterhood we're experiencing with each new discovery on behalf of womankindness.

Write to Linseed, % Becki Martinez, 2406 California, Berkeley, and send \$1.50 for the poster plus \$.50 for handling. It's only \$1.00 if you are in the bay area and can get it directly from the Linseed sisters at 841-9945 or 548-4293. Bulk orders at a reduced rate are also available. ▲





## CHRISTMAS WITH THE HOLY FAMILY



by Susan Cavin

Christmas come tomorrow  
I can't wait  
I wanna live like Rudolph  
Santa, take me away  
but...  
what if Santa like Daddy?  
just another...man...  
daddy take me away alright  
to the basement  
and the darker alleyways of our house  
everyhouse  
and talks about my pussy  
in a fatherly way of course  
except sometimes when he gets me mixed up with mama  
and calls me her name and  
well, you know, he was drunk  
and he didn't know what he was doing  
that's what mama says

oh, what if santa really like daddy?  
the man I been dreaming about every Christmas  
the man who could take me away from all of this...  
home  
somehow this all too familiar  
like other dreams  
some tape recorder been playin' softly in my ear  
while I was sleeping  
all my life...  
oh, but it's Christmas  
and I shouldn't be thinking  
like this  
I'm too sensitive, you know  
that's what mama says  
anyway, Christmas come tomorrow  
and I can't wait  
mama got her shoes off  
she feels right at home  
brother got his train set, 29 years overgrown  
mama waiting on him hand and foot  
"why don't you have some fruit cake, johnny,  
a growing boy needs to eat"  
how come mama don't do that for me?  
I need to grow too, besides I like fruit cake  
guess I don't have any balls for her to bust  
and mama like them balls  
Daddy says I'm his little girl though  
oh yeah, daddy...daddy's got his liquor  
hiding everything he knows  
and I'm in the closet  
paralyzed  
blowing my nose  
singing do-dah daddy don't you corner me tonight  
do dah daddy wants a virgin  
he likes it tight  
mama's in the kitchen cooking christmas  
saying he's a sight  
the way he wants virgin mary every christmas night  
winking at me and saying to him  
jc, no tonight  
everynight  
so he comes on me  
forgetting I ain't no virgin  
cause he bang bang banged me late one night  
every other year



every evening mama makes the point  
 that she don't know what's going on between daddy and me  
 she can't see everything with her back turned you know  
 and with all my screaming  
 how could anyone hear a word?  
 like help  
 but she told me with her silence that she understood  
 how awful it was to sleep with that drunk  
 it don't feel good and she's sorry  
 but she just can't do it some nights  
 and she loves me  
 and comforts me with  
 "life has been good to me, and it'll be nice for you too  
 someday if you trust in the Lord God with all your..."  
 oh, mama  
 another man  
 I wonder if he drinks too  
 every Christmas  
 it gets heavy around the house  
 everybody thinking, you know  
 another year loss  
 another one to get through together  
 and oh, every year  
 he cries about the war  
 not this one  
 the one before that  
 Christmas in Germany  
 1945  
 do wah  
 and how he almost lost his life  
 30 years ago  
 them graphic german details gonna wash my brain  
 if mama don't do it first screaming  
 she wants her life back from me  
 the youth I look  
 she says I took from her  
 she don't drink  
 she's a Christian woman  
 I don't understand these people  
 they're my family and I just love them to death  
 you know, I guess maybe people never understand family love  
 you know, the love between them and their parents  
 and the holy love between a man like my father and a lady  
 like my mother  
 people never understand it no matter how old they are  
 but you know they love you in the same way you know  
 that god loves you—  
 you don't  
 you do know  
 if you're a man child daddy loves you the same way god,  
 the big he in caps,  
 loved his only son,  
 he sent him to die on the cross  
 to wear thorns in his head because he thought too much

it's Christmas  
 it's ok  
 to talk about jesus, isn't it?  
 yeah, the big He had a purpose in life for his son alright,  
 death,  
 a suffering death that he had to thank god for  
 because his father couldn't live  
 except through his son  
 and it hurt god a lot to turn his back  
 at the crucial moment  
 that his son begged him not to do him in  
 enough about god and the boys.  
 And if you're a woman child you know daddy loves you  
 the same way god loved Mary  
 he wants to bang you up secretly  
 like it never really happened  
 nobody talks much about mary who got some goddamned  
 male seed crammed up her ass  
 not even the writers of Jesus Christ Superstar talk about that  
 and how nobody would believe her  
 that it wasn't a fuck  
 of course, it wasn't a fuck  
 it was a god-rape  
 and nobody would believe her except her understanding husband  
 my mother when we're out in public describes my father  
 as her understanding husband  
 and pats him on the head when she says it and calls him honey  
 she calls me honey too  
 after she watches daddy put his hands on my tits  
 when he french kisses me goodnight everynight  
 it's times like that I remember best  
 when she calls him honey  
 it's real nice seeing them like that  
 loving each other  
 like they love me  
 and it's christmas, a family time  
 we can't talk too good  
 but we love each other.  
 Every Christmas  
 we pretend  
 a whole year of filth and hate never happened  
 I guess all families are like that  
 and it's at special times like Christmas  
 that everybody knows  
 the things they never say to each other  
 but would like to all year round  
 I guess the thing I'd like to say to my family this Christmas  
 that I never get the chance to say  
 is  
 daddy, I hate you  
 and the plastic cock  
 you keep locked in the trunk  
 of our second car  
 and mama, why did you try to kill me  
 instead of him?

Dec. 15, 1972



# MOVIE REVIEW

## The Laughing Policeman

by Joanie Millard

There is nothing funny about *The Laughing Policeman*, starring Walter Matthau and Bruce Dern. In fact, it was one of the most outrageous, humorless exposes on violence and homosexuality ever produced. Not to mention the fact that it was so poorly edited one could not understand the last third of the picture (if that much).

Producer/Director Stuart Rosenberg "wanted to make a Saturday night film," based on the book, *The Laughing Policeman*, because he found the novel "to be full of all the entertainment values of the detective thrillers I saw in movie theaters on Saturday nights, when I was a kid."

Mr. Rosenberg's idea of entertainment values, better known as what will bring in the most money, is to allow the viewer to witness a mass murder scene on a bus, complete with "accurate" shots of bullet holes in bodies and blood spurting all over the windows, and to portray homosexuals in a negatively stereotypical way. This is far from being a "detective thriller."

The plot is a rehash of the usual police department in search of the unknown killer routine. However this time the killer is repeatedly referred to as a "fruitcake" once it has been discovered the man is a homosexual. To San Francisco Policeman Leo Larsen (Bruce Dern) this is reason enough to arrest Larrimore (Lou Gossett), lack of evidence notwithstanding. To this attitude Jake Martin (Walter Matthau) makes a somewhat positive (Uncle Tom) response: "You can't do that. They're (gays) demonstrating now so it's all right." That doesn't necessarily mean he likes it, just that he knows he'll get a full scale riot from the gay community if he arrests Larrimore without cold, hard facts.

So that this film could not be trashed for discriminating against women, lesbianism was also included, perhaps to arouse the prurient interests of those bored with all the male homosexuality going on. In one scene, cop Larsen was questioning the "roommate" of one of the female murder victims. This woman was shown a picture of one of the male victims and was asked if she had ever seen him. Receiving a negative response, Larsen then asked if her roommate had known this man and/or dated him. The answer:

"No." To satisfy his own curiosity (and male ego) he asked if her friend dated a lot of men. With an appropriate sneer and a "screw you" tone of voice, she replied, "She didn't go out with *men*." If this exchange of words had gone untouched it would have produced the only positive aspect of the film, however, lest the director show anything favorable about gays, he had this woman compliantly smiling when Larsen told her that if she gave him some information he would buy her "the best French dinner you've ever had and all you have to do is show up to eat it." That is exactly what she did, in nothing less than a sexist decorated restaurant (table legs in the shape of women's legs).

Keeping in character as a totally incompetent, bigoted, gay-baiting pig, Larsen displayed more of his threatened male ego by referring to the dead woman as a "happily married dyke." And when he said dyke, you knew he didn't mean it in reference to a confident, strong, aggressive woman. Why didn't he just say butch and reinforce the old stereotyped image?

Gay oppression was the focus of this movie and obviously what Rosenberg hopes to make his money off of. He spices up the action by showing a gay men's leather bar, one man making a possible pick-up with another man in a market, and having the killer going to an effeminate male hairdresser.

All of this and more are hardly the ingredients for a police thriller. The film looked more like the fantasies of a "closet case" doing research for a sociology paper and then having guilt feelings when he comes out (he is absolved however, by being killed at the end).

I sincerely hope that this movie is never released to the general public, but if by some event it should come out, I recommend you don't see it. You definitely won't find it funny. ▲

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# LOOKING BACK

"This year we will try to  
tell each other the truth."

by Tessier

*Looking at Women*, Fran Winant's soft-cover poem(s), a 1971 release out of Violet Press, is, in essence, an elementary primer for the lesbian. The work is not basically immature, but the poetry is all elbows and knees, awkward, naive, and terribly honest. It is the story of first loves, first fears, first anger, first Movements; its value is not so much in the poetry as in the very personal account of the lesbian struggle to begin and to begin again.

As is most often the case in lesbian poetry, Ms. Winant expresses her pain more effectively than her anger, and she does not speak quite so clearly for the community of lesbians as she speaks for herself. Her most effective poetry and perceptions are those dealing with her almost-frighteningly personal explorations of individual women and their way of loving (in particular, the poem entitled "pennie"). Here she is familiar with every aspect of her subject, and she explores women with great sensitivity and almost-fervent tenderness.

The whole gamut of first-expressed feeling is here; from self-denial, through discovery, love-hate and loneliness, on to the strength of women together. This volume is essentially the story of a journey that every lesbian has made.

To every lesbian, then, no matter how polished your politics, particularly if you don't like poetry: Read this book. If it does not hurt you a little, you missed coming out. Go back and do it again. Perhaps you will discover that you too are being watched. ▲

## RUBYFRUIT JUNGLE:

### A Review

by Jeanne Cordova

*Rubyfruit Jungle* is the story of an orphaned, lower class, gutsy young woman who loved women because "(they) are thick and rich and full of hidden treasures and besides, they taste good." *Rubyfruit Jungle* is the life of Molly Bolt, daughter of Ruby Drollinger . . . is the fictionalized autobiography of nationally known lesbian feminist poet and theoretician, Rita Mae Brown.

What is important about Brown's work is that it is the first of its kind. The first published novel that portrays a lesbian as a person. It's really very simple. It's not a story about "a lesbian." It is a story about an unusually strong and colorful woman's irrepressible, funny, and politically personal march through class, sex and race bigotry while retaining a positive self image.

Brown has written the first contemporary fiction in which a character's lesbian sexuality is an extension, rather than a controlling factor of her personality. The reader comes to know Molly Bolt. Molly Bolt loved her cousin Leroy whom she was going to "run away with and become actors." Molly Bolt hitchhiked from Florida to New York arriving with \$14.61. Molly Bolt lived in a hole, and fought her way into and through a "polluted, parched and putrid (city), the only place I have any room, any hope." Molly Bolt was a dreamer and artist who didn't believe in "letting yourself get screwed on rules other people make." Molly Bolt's 'rule' was "to make movies, my movies . . . real movies about real people and the shit that comes down."

And yes, Molly Bolt has sex along the way. Molly Bolt sleeps with women, sometimes for experiment, sometimes for love, sometimes just because. And sometimes it was good, sometimes empty, sometimes euphoric, sometimes - a waste of time. There are confrontations with parents, teachers, friends and employers about her sexual orientation -- sexuality, per se, is not a problem for Molly Bolt. Heterosexual male readers will find for once (!) this "lesbian novel" -- "disgustingly normal." That is the heaviest political statement made by *Rubyfruit Jungle*.

In previous treatment of lesbian sexuality, authors have taken a number of cop-out styles as to how and why "two women do it together." They often deposit their characters just outside the bedroom door (*The Well of Loneliness*), slide over sex as 'humorous' (*Lesbian Nation*), spin a psychological treatise in between orgasms (*North Beach Girls*), or turn every touch and

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*the reservoir in your  
eyes has broken, a great  
wave spills out, ground slides un-  
der my feet, undertow  
tugs at my ankles, I  
do not want to come to  
you like this, water is  
rising up my thighs, my  
panties are wet, my  
breasts float, the ends of my  
hair are drifting away  
water runs in my mouth  
a bird is crying  
a cat is caught in  
a barbed wire fence, a  
cow hangs dead in an  
apple tree, oh my  
sister do not reach  
out for me like that*

by Diane Raintree



### *RUBYFRUIT JUNGLE, Cont.*

look into a twisted sex-obsessed pot-pourri (assorted Trash). Brown is the first author to follow lesbian-oriented characters in and out of bed and emotions with a health and openness accorded to thousands of heterosexual "love" stories. It is a testament to ourselves, to the publishers of *Rubyfruit Jungle* (Daughters, Inc.), and Rita Mae herself that a story lesbians can read and recognize has at last been told. For us; it is good, it is warm, it is honest, it is funny, it really is about *us* this time.

Solid in style, strong in dialogue, a credit to the creative and literary talents of one woman and all women, it looks as though Molly Bolt has stopped along her way to write a screen script for that "real movie about real people."

This week I and other members of the Los Angeles Gay Community are meeting with Programming Executives of NBC, ABC, CBS, The Motion Picture Academy, and the Screen Writer's Guild. We spend hours of stale censored discussions listening to, "What do you mean by 'a positive image' of gay people?," "Society doesn't believe there ARE 'normal' homosexuals," "There are no decent scripts."

I am taking *Rubyfruit Jungle* to tomorrow's meeting.

**feminist  
therapist**

**I teach  
personal  
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# SAPPHA OF LESBOS



by Ann Forfreedom

## PART 1

For almost 2600 years, the name of the Greek "tenth Muse" has been slandered, while her island home of Lesbos has been vilified. Today, herstory and feminists are beginning to see beneath the lies and to praise the Lesbian culture that flourished in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.

Praises abound for the great artist whom men now call Sappho. As Alice Ames Winter wrote of her, "She never knew that she was to be stigmatized as a symbol of the untamed woman. She had the satisfaction of living, as far as we know, a most delightful life where she was glorified and loved for doing the thing she most enjoyed. Her martyrdom was altogether post-mortem."<sup>1</sup>

All the Hellenes of her day -- the Aeolians, Ionians, Dorians, and Achaeans -- admired this "nurseling of the Graces". They called her the "pride of Hellas" and "child of Aphrodite and Eros". Later men of power could not deny her greatness. Solon, the famous lawmaker, heard a poem of hers and vowed not to die until he had memorized it. Socrates called her wise and Plato named her the "tenth Muse", while Plutarch likened her to "the heart of a volcano".<sup>2</sup> She was called "the Poetess" as Homer was called "the Poet". Demetrius of Phaleron said of her, "Wherefore Sappho is eloquent and sweet and when she sings of beauty and love and of spring, and of the kingfisher; and every



beautiful expression is woven into her poetry beside what she herself invented."<sup>3</sup> Dioscorides, in the *Palantine Anthology*, says, "I bid thee all hail, Great Lady, as equal to the Gods: for we still hold thy songs to be daughters of the immortals."<sup>4</sup>

Centuries later, J.J. Bachofen added his praise. He insisted that in her "strivings to elevate her sex . . . she was concerned not with one alone; Eros drove her to them all . . . Wherever she found physical beauty, Eros impelled her to create spiritual beauty as well . . . In the presence of this idea she came to look with indifference on everything she had valued as a young girl, wealth, jewels, the ornaments of outward sweet existence."<sup>5</sup>

But today, only 700 lines of her poetry are available because Christian churchmen burnt it, outlawed it, and cursed it. Today, the words "Sapphic" and "Lesbian" have negative connotations and are associated with solely sexual activities.

Who was this "pride of Hellas" so highly praised and so thoroughly denigrated?

She was born in 610 or 612 B.C. in the city of Eresos, or perhaps in the main city of Mytilene, on the Aegean island of Lesbos. In her lifetime, she was known as Sappha (or Psappha),<sup>6</sup> although jealous men centuries later renamed her a more masculine "Sappho".

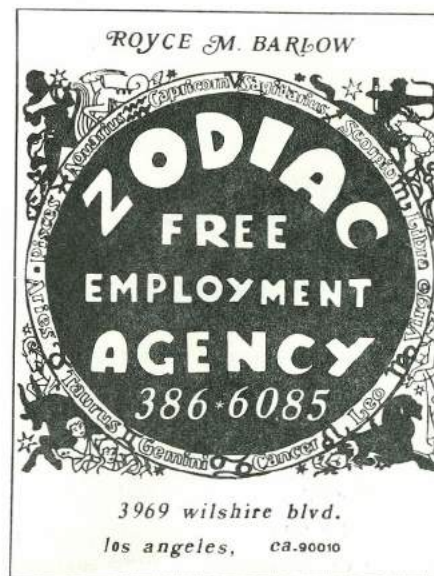
The Aeolic Lesbos in which Sappha grew up was a mixture of matriarchal luxury and male tyranny. Matriarchal Crete long before had fallen to male invaders, and golden Mycenae had lost its splendor. The Doric state of Sparta was young, filled with music but no barracks. Lesbos, a sea-surrounded cultural center of feminine activity, faced the rich Lydian empire on the nearby mainland, and was in contact with the Carian people, both matriarchal. In fact, the Lydian empire produced the new seven-stringed lyres made famous a generation before Sappha. The creation of the cithara, or seven-stringed lyre, today is credited to Terpander, a man who directly preceeded Sappha. Male supremacist Athens was not yet powerful enough to challenge the power of Lesbian women.

J.A. Symonds describes Lesbos with its mountains and five main coastal cities: "Aeolian women were not confined to the harem, like Ionians, or subjected to the rigorous discipline of the Spartans. While mixing freely with male society, they were highly educated and accustomed to express their sentiments . . . All the luxuries and elegancies of life which the climate and the rich valleys of Lesbos could afford were at their disposal: exquisite gardens . . . pine-shadowed coves . . . marble cliffs . . . In such scenes as these, the Lesbian poets lived and thought of love. When we read their poems, we seem to have the perfumes, colors, sounds,

and lights of that luxurious land distilled in verse."<sup>7</sup>

Sappha apparently was born into a wealthy and aristocratic family. Her father's name may have been Eurygyus or Simon or Euarchus or Semus or Scamandronymous. Her mother's name was definitely Cleis (or Kleis). She had two brothers named Larichus and Charaxos (or Charaxus). Some accounts mention a third brother, Eurygyus, but nothing is known about him except his name. She was raised as a free citizen of Lesbos and was highly educated. Her brother Larichus became a public cupbearer at Mytilene, an office reserved for young nobles. Charaxos sold wine from Lesbian estates. In one of her poems, Sappha refers to a time when she became very angry with Charaxos. Interpreters of the poem have different understandings about why she became angry. Athenaios, in his 3rd-century A.D. *Doctors at Dinner* (13.596 b) says, "Doricha became Charaxos' mistress when he went to Naukratis on a business trip, and beautiful Sappho accuses her in a poem of having fleeced her brother Charaxos of much of his fortune."<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, 20th-century Willis Barnstone says Sappha "chided him for wasting his money in liberating a slave courtesan of Naukratis, the Greek port in Egypt, who was thus enabled to remain in business on her account."<sup>9</sup> Few accounts agree about Doricha, also known as Rhodopis, the rosy-eyed. But then, few agree about Sappha, the rebel-poetess.

Apparently, Sappha became part of a circle of intellectuals who opposed the "tyrant" as a male leader was then titled, of Mytilene. She and a fellow poet, Alceus (or Alkaïos) were exiled by the tyrant Pittacus. It appears that Sappha was exiled twice in her adolescence, once by the tyrant Myrsilos to the city of





Pyrrha, and once by the tyrant Pittacus to the city of Syracuse in Sicily. These exiles probably occurred between 605 B.C. and 591 B.C.<sup>10</sup> Obviously, Sappha was politically and publicly important.

She probably returned from her second exile when Pittacus granted amnesty to political exiles. She may have been 20 years old at this time.<sup>11</sup> When she returned, she began the "school" for which she achieved renown. Descriptions of the school have varied, depending on the level of sexism among the interpreters; descriptions range from a "finishing school for upper-class young ladies" to a "women's club" to a religious priestesshood. Sappha and other Lesbian women such as Gorgo and Andromeda taught ceremonies of worship to the Goddess of Life and Love, Aphrodite, in their schools. Sappha invented new instruments and poetic forms, and she put poems to music, creating a whole new form of lyric poetry. Her student-companions, whom she called *heterai* ("companions"),<sup>12</sup> came to her to learn music and joy, to contemplate nature and life, to practice among themselves the dances, ceremonies, and love liaisons to which Sappha dedicated her art. They learned to love themselves and to love each other, and to see the Goddess in each of their sisters. Sappha herself learned with them and from them.

These young women came to Sappha from all parts of Greece. They often came from areas undergoing rapid and violent transformation from matriarchal to patriarchal structures. Did they come by themselves, using their own resources? Did their parents send them? Was it the mother who sent a girl to Sappha? Were the women sent to get a better education? Or to maintain an old female-created culture?

There are no answers yet. A few names of these *heterai* are known. Among Sappha's students were Anactoria from Miletus in Lydian territory,<sup>13</sup> Eunice from Salamis, Gongyla from Colophon, Atthis, Erinna, Mika, Telesippa, Megara, Dika, Damophyla, Anagora, Mnasidica, Gyrinna (or Gyrinno), Sulpicia, Hero (named after the Goddess Hera), and Timas (a name which was later transmuted to Timothy, an exclusively male name).

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There is a tradition that there were 76 poetesses among the ancient Greeks, but few names were known. Apparently, the nine most distinguished poetesses were called, collectively, the Terrestrial Muses. The basis in mythology for this title was the Great Goddess in her artistic aspect, which, during the eons, became the Nine Muses. In Hellenic theology, the Muses were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (Memory), and they lived on Mt. Helicon. The names of the Muses were: Clio (history), Euterpe (lyric poetry accompanied by the flute), Thalia (comic drama and idyllic poetry), Melpomene (tragedy), Terpsichore (choral dance and song), Erato (love verse and mimicry), Polymaia (hymns), Urania (astronomy) and Calliope (epic poetry).<sup>14</sup>

The Terrestrial Muses included Sappha and some of her students, as well as later poetesses. The first earthly Muse was Sappha. The second was her friend and student, Erinna of the isle of Telos. Erinna, according to tradition, had been chained to her spinning wheel by her mother for some reason. Instead of lamenting the punishment, Erinna composed a famous poem to "The Distaff." Unfortunately, Erinna died at the age of 19, and a eulogy to her asks, "Had death delayed, what fame had equalled hers?"<sup>15</sup>

The next two Terrestrial Muses were also teacher and student. Myrtis and Corinna were contemporaries of Pindar of Thebes, and both often outshone him in poetic contests. Then came Telesilla of Argos and Sparta, Telesilla armed her countrywomen and led them to victory. As a memorial, her statue was placed in the temple of Aphrodite at Argos.

Praxilla of Sicyon not only sang praises of Aphrodite, but was honored in her native city with a statue made by Lysippus. A few generations later, in the same district of Sicyon, a young woman named Axiothea or Phlishia heard about Plato, read his *Republic*, and determined to become his student. She disguised herself in masculine attire, went to Athens, and was accepted into the Academy. She continued disguising herself and became a prominent member of the school. According to tradition, Plato would postpone his lectures if Axiothea happened to be absent, saying, "The intellect sufficient to grasp the subject is not yet present." She also was instructed by Speusippus, who became notorious for being the lover of another female Academician, Lasthenia. It almost goes without saying that the two women got together and both became teachers of philosophy, though Lasthenia also went on to become a courtesan (or *heterae*, as by then, the word was being used pejoratively).



The other Terrestrial Muses included Nossis of Locris in Italy, and Anyte of Tegea and Moero of Byzantium. Nossis flourished in the 4th century B.C., while the others gained fame in the third century A.D. Moero's most ambitious poem was an heroic poem called *Mnemosyne*. She also composed epigrams and elegies.<sup>16</sup>

Lesser-known Greek poetesses include Cleobuline of Rhodes, and Megalostrata and Clitagora of Sparta. Greek women were inventive in other arts as well. A Corinthian woman, Cora, the daughter of Butades, is credited with the invention of modelling in clay. Timarete, the daughter of Micon, produced a painting of Artemis which was placed at Ephesus and served there for a long time. At Eleusis, Irene, the daughter of Cratinus, had painted the figure of a young girl, perhaps a priestess. Other female painters include Calypso, Alcisthene, Aristarete, and Olympias. The most celebrated was Lalla of Cyzicus, who worked with pencil and ivory. She painted portraits, primarily of women.<sup>17</sup>

Sappha sang most of the songs she created. Many of her poems were memorized and recited by Lesbians and Greek mainlanders alike. Her new instruments were used by many artists. Sappha herself is credited with inventing the *plectrum*, which is a special Aeolian lyre; she also invented the Mixolydian mode which was later used by writers of tragedies, the *pectis* or quill, the Sapphic eleven-syllable verse, and many new words used in her poetry. She sang in her own Aeolian dialect. As one of her poems says, she sang,

*"Songs that move the heart of the shaken heaven,  
Songs that break the heart of the earth with pity,  
Hearing, to hear them".<sup>18</sup>*

One of the surviving fragments of poetic discourse tells of a duet between Alceus and Sappha. Alceus addressed her:

*"Violet-crowned, chaste, sweet-smiling Sappha,  
I fain would speak, but bashfulness forbids."*

Sappha replied:

*"Had thy wish been pure and manly  
And no evil on thy tongue,  
Shame had not possessed thine eyelids;  
From thy lips the right had rung."<sup>19</sup>*

As Mary Barnard says of Sappha, "She was riding the crest of her own wave . . . The ambiguities which enrich her simplest lines, the overtones and undertones, the occasional puns, which are not quite puns and seem right instead of ridiculous, are almost impossible to convey in another language . . . Of all her virtues, however, the one most stressed by her modern critics and least taken account of by her translators is that of fresh colloquial directness of speech."<sup>20</sup> Trying to

describe Sapphic style is difficult, especially since most of her poetry is unknown today. Interestingly, someone is now crediting the Biblical *Song of Songs* to Sappha,<sup>21</sup> primarily because of the style of the love lyrics. Sappha said of her style, "I love delicacy, and for me love has the splendor and the beauty of the sun."<sup>22</sup> As Guy Davenport summarizes, "Spirit, for Sappho, shines from matter; one embraces the two together, inseparable. The world is to be loved. It attracts, we pursue and possess. Its structure contains the goddess Aphrodite who inspires love, and her children Eros and Peitho (Goddess Persuasion, whom Sappha preferred to her male counterpart, Eros), who tend to their appointed duties, the lighting of the fire of love in the heart and the seduction of the beloved."<sup>23</sup>



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## FOOTNOTES

1. Alice Ames Winter, *THE HERITAGE OF WOMEN* (Minton, Balch, and Co., N.Y., 1927, p. 29.
2. Mitchell Carroll, *WOMAN, IN ALL AGES AND ALL COUNTRIES: GREEK WOMEN* (Rittenhouse, Philadelphia, 1907-08), p. 110.
3. *Ibid.*
4. P. Maurice Hill, trans. *POEMS OF SAPPHO* (Philosophical Library, 1954), p. ix.
5. J.J. Bachofen, *MYTH, RELIGION, AND MOTHER RIGHT* (1926), quoted in Phyllis Chesler's *WOMEN AND MADNESS* (Doubleday, N.Y., 1972, p. 183.
6. Her name is still controversial. I've found mention of her name as Sappha or Psappha in: Mary Beard's *WOMAN AS FORCE IN HISTORY* (Collier paperback), p. 320; Pierre Louys' *SONGS OF BILITIS* (trans. Mitchell Buck, 1926-32), p. 303; Will Durant's *THE LIFE OF GREECE* (Simon and Schuster, N.Y. 1939), p. 153; and Elsa Gidlow's *MOODS OF EROS* (Druid Heights Press, Mill Valley, Ca., 94941, n.d.), in "Invocation to Sappho", pp. 3-4. Willis Barnstone comments in *SAPPHO, LYRICS IN THE ORIGINAL GREEK* (Anchor, 1965), p. xviii, that the Aeolic dialect differs from Attic Greek in preserving the original long "a", among other details. Nevertheless, translators and commentators insist on calling her "Sappho". Herstorians and feminists are challenging this misuse.
7. Quoted in Mitchell Carroll, *WOMAN, OP. CIT.*, pp. 118-119.
8. Quoted in Willis Barnstone, trans. *SAPPHO, OP. CIT.*, p. 165.
9. *Ibid.*, p. ix.
10. Mitchell Carroll, *WOMAN, OP. CIT.*, p. 111; P. Maurice Hill, trans., *THE POEMS OF SAPPHO, OP. CIT.*, p. x; Will Durant, *THE LIFE OF GREECE, op. cit.*, p. 153.
11. Jane Sellman, "Sappho", in *WOMEN: A JOURNAL OF LIBERATION* (3028 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21218), Vol. 3, no. 2, p. 24.
12. Will Durant, *THE LIFE OF GREECE, OP. CIT.*, p. 154.
13. Guy Davenport, trans., *SAPPHO, POEMS AND FRAGMENTS* (Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1959), p. x.
14. Will Durant, *THE LIFE OF GREECE, OP. CIT.*, p. 186.
15. Mitchell Caroli, *WOMAN, OP. CIT.*, pp. 301-302.
16. *IBID.*, pp. 302-304.
17. *IBID.*, p. 105. Father's names only are mentioned by this male author.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
19. *IBID.*, p. 112.
20. Mary Barnard, trans., *SAPPHO, A NEW TRANSLATION* (Univ. of California, Berkeley, 1958), pp. 95, 102.
21. Norma C. Ireland, *INDEX TO WOMEN OF THE WORLD* (Faxon, Mass., 1970), P. xiv. Ms. Ireland says of Sappha, "Her SONG OF SONGS is in the Bible."
22. Charles S. Muir, *WOMEN, THE MAKERS OF HISTORY* (Vantage, N.Y., 1956), p. 32.
23. Guy Davenport, trans., *SAPPHO, POEMS AND FRAGMENTS, op. cit.*, p. xi.



WE SHALL ENJOY IT. AS FOR HIM  
WHO FINDS FAULT, MAY SILLINESS  
AND SORROW TAKE HIM!

SAPPHA

*This article was published by Athena Press, a feminist press formed by Ann Forfreedom and friends.*

*The article was researched for the Feminist History Research Project, 218 So. Venice Blvd., Venice, Ca. 90291.*

To be continued next month.



## LETTERS

dear Sisters,

I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at California State University, Sacramento. I am presently working on my masters thesis on Lesbian Mothers. Many Lesbian mothers are now engaged in court cases to gain or regain custody of their children and are in dire need of support from many levels. My hope for this thesis is that it can be used to strengthen the arguments and dispel the negative stereotypes of Lesbian motherhood, as well as to increase society's awareness and acceptance of Lesbians and Lesbian child-raising.

I have developed a questionnaire in conjunction with Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon and other members of the Lesbian community, which is now ready for distribution. My population of subjects can include any woman who considers herself to be a Lesbian who is raising or has raised a child whether or not they are now living together.

To reach as many women as possible, I need your help. Can you announce the existence of this research in your magazine? Women who are willing to complete a questionnaire can drop me a card letting me know they will participate.


All replies will be held strictly confidential and responses will be anonymous and in no way connected to the names or addresses of respondents.

Obtaining a large number of Lesbian mothers for my sample is crucial to the effectiveness of my thesis; any publicity you can give to this effort will be critical to its success and greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,  
Barbara Bryant  
School of Social Work  
Calif. State University  
Sacramento, CA 95819

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YWCA, Room 206, 5th & Seneca, Seattle, Wash. 622-4077  
Gay Women's Resource Center  
University YWCA, 4224 University Way, N.E., Seattle,  
WA 98105, 632-4747, ext. 3

It's About Time - Feminist Bookstore & Collective  
5502 University Way N.E., Seattle, Wash 98105,  
LA 5-0999

WASHINGTON, D.C. (area code 202)

Gay Switchboard  
Community Building, 1724 20th St., N.W., Washington, D



# calendar

(See "Where It's At" for phones and addresses)

## LOS ANGELES

- MONDAYS** SELF HELP CLINIC: 7:30 pm Westside Women's Center  
LEGAL COUNSELING: 5:00 to 7:00 pm, Gay Community Services Center (GCSC)  
call for appointment  
RADICAL THERAPY: 6:30 to 8:30 pm, drop-in rap, Westside Women's Center
- TUESDAYS** ALCOHOLICS TOGETHER: 8:00 pm, GCSC  
GAY AWARENESS RAP (for women): 8:00 pm, GCSC  
LESBIAN MOTHERS RAP: 8:00 pm, GCSC
- WEDNESDAYS** GAY AWARENESS RAP (mixed): 1:30 pm, GCSC  
LESBIAN FEMINISTS: 7:30 pm at Westside Women's Center  
RADICAL THERAPY: 6:30 to 8:30 pm, drop-in rap at Westside Women's Center
- THURSDAYS** TIDE COLLECTIVE: 7:30 pm. All sisters who want to help are welcome.  
373 N. Western, Room 202, Los Angeles, CA 467-3931  
WOMEN'S EVENING: 7:30 pm, GCSC  
GAY LAW STUDENTS: 9:30 pm, GCSC  
WOMEN'S GYNECOLOGY CLINIC: 7:00 to 9:00 pm, GCSC
- FRIDAYS:** GAY SISTERHOOD: 7:00 pm at UCLA, Powell Library 90, Coffeehouse follows  
at 9:00 pm.  
WOMEN'S NIGHT: Womenspace  
GOOD TIME HOUR: (Gay Women) 8:00 pm, Westside Women's Center  
GAY YOUTH (under 21): 7:30 pm, GCSC  
SABBATH SERVICES: 8:00 pm Metropolitan Community Temple
- SUNDAYS** GAY WOMEN'S CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING: 4:00 pm, GCSC  
WOMEN'S UNION MEETINGS: (Every other Sunday). Call 665-7465 for  
Information  
CHURCH SERVICES: 10:45 am and 7:30 pm, Metropolitan Community Church

## NEW YORK

- NIGHTLY** LESBIAN SWITCHBOARD 5 to 10 pm, 741-2610 for information and rap
- MONDAYS** LESBIAN FEMINIST LIBERATION, 7:30 pm, general meeting, GAA Firehouse, 99 Wooster  
IDENTITY HOUSE, 6 - 10 pm, walk-in and short-term counseling, referral service, come-out  
groups, FREE  
GAY OLDER WOMEN'S LIBERATION (GOWL), 8 pm, Women's Liberation Bldg.
- TUESDAYS** WESTSIDE DISCUSSION GROUP, 8 pm (first and third Tuesdays), women's night  
LESBIAN FOOD CONSPIRACY, 5:30 to 7:30 pm, Women's Liberation Bldg.
- THURSDAYS** GAY WOMEN'S ALTERNATIVE, 8 pm, Speakers, socializing, nonpolitical  
group for women over 30.  
MATTACHINE WOMEN, 6 pm, Game Night--bridge, scrabble, checkers, etc.  
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN, 7:30 pm, general meeting
- FRIDAYS** LESBIAN DANCE, 9 pm every other Friday (Dec 14 & 28), Sponsored by LFL,  
GAA Firehouse  
GAY SYNAGOGUE, 9pm, Services and Oneg Shabbat
- SATURDAYS** IDENTITY HOUSE, (see Monday for details)
- SUNDAYS** IDENTITY HOUSE, (see Monday for details)  
LESBIAN ACTIVITIES, 2 pm, sponsored by LFL at GAA Firehouse  
CHURCH SERVICES, 2 pm Church of the Beloved Disciple; 7 pm Metropolitan  
Community Church  
EULENSPIEGEL SOCIETY' S&M, 6 pm, Church of the Beloved Disciple,  
General meeting.  
NY RADICAL FEMINISTS, 8 pm general meeting, Women's Liberation Bldg  
(first Sunday of every month)